

To the St. Neots Rural District Council.

31ST MARCH, 1921.

GENTLEMEN,

I beg to hand you herewith my Annual Report for the past 12 months.

Population The population for the purpose of estimating the birth and death rates is 2233.

Birth Rate Fifty births have been registered during the past year, a substantial increase—19—over the previous record. The birth rate per 1000 of population amounts to 22·3.

Death Rate The total number of deaths recorded for 1920 is 41—a higher figure by 5 than in 1919. The chief specified causes, of death were as follows : Influenza 2, Cancer 4, Tuberculosis 3, Heart Disease 4, Respiratory Diseases 7, Congenital Debility 3, other Diseases 18. The death rate is 18·3.

Infant Mortality Eight deaths of infants under 1 year of age were registered giving a death rate per 1000 of registered births of 160·0.

Notifiable Disease There has been an increase in the number of infectious cases reported during the year, a total of 15 being notified, made up as follows : Tuberculosis 7, Scarlatina 4, Pneumonia 2, Diphtheria 1, Malaria 1.

Scarlatina The Scarlatina patients were all inmates of one house in Little Paxton. The origin of the disease was not traced, and there were no further cases.

Influenza Influenza was present during the Spring, though in a less virulent form than previous epidemics. Post influenzal pneumonia was notified in two instances. The Ministry of Health has offered to provide preventive vaccine for use by the local practitioners, which is available free of charge. Two deaths occurred from influenza

Tuberculosis Seven cases of Tuberculosis were notified, with three deaths

No steps appear to have been taken to minimise the risk to patients returning from treatment to their unhealthy cottages. The benefit received away is often lost under these circumstances—a matter of much regret when such universal efforts are being made to combat this scourge. The same remark applies equally forcibly to those persons obliged to resume occupations of an unhealthy character ; the risk of a relapse is heightened by such a course, and it ought, if possible, to be avoided.

TO THE

Eaton Socon Rural District Council.

31ST MARCH, 1921.

GENTLEMEN,

I beg to hand you my Annual Report for that portion of your district which is under my care for the year 1920.

Natural
and Social
Conditions

The physical features of the district of course remain unchanged ; parts of some of the villages are low-lying and subject to flooding from the River Ouse. The hamlets are scattered and the industries are of a purely agricultural nature.

Population

The population, as estimated for the purposes of birth and death statistics, is 3336.

Births

The number of births registered during the year was 78, a higher figure than has been reached for some years. Nine of this total were illegitimate. The birth rate shows a satisfactory increase, working out at 23·3 per 1000 of population.

Deaths

The total number of deaths from all causes is 34. These are comprised under the following heads : — Cancer 6 ; Respiratory Diseases 4 ; Diphtheria 1 ; Pulmonary Tuberculosis 2 ; Heart Disease 1 ; Bright's Disease 1 ; Cirrhosis of Liver 1 ; Violence 1 ; Congenital Debility 1 ; other causes 16. The death rate per 1000 of population is 10·1, an unusually low figure for the district.

Infant
Mortality

Only 2 deaths of infants under 1 year are recorded, the death rate under this heading working out at 25·6 per 1000 of registered births.

Drainage

The drainage at Eaton Ford is still far from satisfactory— in fact very little has been done since I drew attention to the state of affairs in my last report. I then recommended various improvements, among which was the draining of the stagnant area in the Weir head at Eaton Ford. The provision of covers for ash bins—to keep out rain—was also suggested, but neither of these alterations have yet been carried out.

Water

The water supply is derived principally from shallow wells, but ponds are sometimes pressed into service for drinking purposes. It is fortunate that the villagers escape water-borne disease, for there are numerous wells which are still unprotected from surface pollution, dust, caused by increased motor traffic, and other impurities. They are a standing danger to health and I would again urge the necessity for carrying out the measures recommended last year.

Notifiable
Disease

There has been very little notifiable disease during 1920 in the Eaton Socon district, only three cases being reported. Early in the year—during April—influenza was present, but to no serious extent and there was no later outbreak. In January 1 case of pneumonia was notified from Eaton Socon. Two cases of diphtheria occurred at Little Barford in August but there was no spread of the disease. One case was fatal. There is a marked decrease in notifiable ailments this year,—16 cases were reported for 1919.

Tubercu-
losis.

Four cases of Tuberculosis were notified and 2 deaths were registered, both pulmonary. To fight this disease successfully dry, airy, sunny cottages are essential and there is need of these in your district. Building is in progress in some villages, but there are still cottages that ought to be closed but are, perforce, inhabited, for lack of others to take their place. Patients are sent away for treatment and a temporary improvement is noticed, which, however, is often not maintained when they return to their homes in the same cottages where the disease developed. Unhealthy occupations are also sometimes resumed with returning strength, which gives very little chance for a permanent recovery to be made.


Details as to actual sanitary work done in your district will be found in the Inspector's Report.

I have the honour to be. Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

A. BOWE,

Medical Officer of Health.



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Water
Supply

The Water Supply in the villages varies very much. In Great Paxton and Abbotsley it is good ; in Southoe where wells were infected a public supply has been provided which analysis proves to be unpolluted. In the valley of the Ouse there is an abundant supply of water from shallow wells in the gravel, but it is very liable to contamination where the wells are sunk in gardens, &c. On the higher clay lands water is scarce and often derived from ponds, but luckily so far no infectious disease has been traced to this source.

I have the honour to be, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

A. BOWE,

Medical Officer of Health.

